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News Release



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ARTHUR R. MARSHALL LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Opens Refuge After Hurricane Frances

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge Have opened the refuge to public access and use on Wednesday, September 15, 2004, stated Mark Musaus, Refuge Manager. The refuge has reopened back to the public after Hurricane Frances hit the Palm Beach County area. For more information visitors may call the Administration Office at (561) 732-3684 or visit our web site at <http://Loxahatchee.fws.gov>.

The refuge is located off U.S. 441/SR 7, two miles south of SR 804 (Boynton Beach Blvd) and three miles north of SR 806 (Delray Beach's Atlantic Avenue). The refuge is currently open from 6:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., seven days a week. Refuge hours change seasonally and are posted at each entrance. The Visitor Center hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from Monday through Wednesday and from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekends and holidays. The Visitor Center is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays through mid- October. The Visitor Center is closed on Christmas Day. An entrance fee of \$5.00 per vehicle or \$1.00 per pedestrian is charged. A variety of annual passes, including a \$12.00 refuge specific annual pass, are available.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 100-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System comprised of over 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fish and wildlife management offices, and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.